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Mania a Peto.

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No 23.

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Inaugural Essay

on the

Treatment

of

Mania a Potu

by

Henry M. Read

of Pa.

1823.

Read March 22 1823

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On the Treatment
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The opinions of Medical Men, on the Treatment of Mania A Potu are so divided, that a just estimate of them cannot easily be formed, except from actual experience. I shall therefore only attempt, to give an account of the different remedies employed, and which of them, I have observed to be most successful, in the practice of the Almshouse of this City. These may be most conveniently considered, under the two plans of treatment generally pursued, viz the Evacuant, and the Stimulant.

Of the remedies included under the first head, I shall give a short, and general account, and then proceed to consider them separately. They consist of Emetics, Purgatives, Bleeding, and sometimes Blisters, after the evacuations, a very slight degree of stimulus is permitted; Narcotics and Antispasmodics, are seldom or never employed.

Emetics are given by Dr Klapp, (who appears to have introduced the practice) "to remove

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offensive matter, which impresses a morbid influence on the nerves of the stomach, and more especially to alter its state, so as to enable it, to perform its healthy functions." Now in the first place, neither the quantity, nor the quality of the matters in the stomach, seem sufficient to cause such a disturbance of its functions, or of the system generally, and in the second place, from the peculiar nature of the disease, the use of so powerful a remedy, seems not to be indicated. The causes which operate in producing this affection, so debilitate the system, that it frequently happens when Emetics have been employed, that reaction can scarcely be produced, by the most active measures. Instances have been known, in which patients have expired, during the operation of vomiting, others, in which they died almost immediately after.

The following is a case, in which the Emetic was fairly tried, without producing those beneficial effects which we might have expected, from a remedy so highly extolled. P. W. was admitted into the Almshouse, on the seventh of August 1822. She had been accustomed to drink freely, for a number of years. Her disease appeared to have arisen from the abstraction of her accustomed stimulus, for a few days.

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When first seen in the evening her mind was very much disturbed and wandering, her countenance bloated, her eyes wild, her tongue not much furrowed, and her pulse small and quick, she had also a considerable degree of tremor. There was not much determination to the head, nor did she complain of pain. Small doses of Tinctura Lipofatidis, and Tinctura Opii, were given her every three hours.

On the morning of the eighth, she appeared to be much the same, six grains of Tartar Emetic were given in divided doses. She vomited freely, but was not at all relieved, on the contrary, an alarming degree of exhaustion was produced, the disposition to sleep did not appear to be any stronger than before, her pulse was very small and feeble. Brandy Toddy was then given her pretty freely, and a nourishing diet ordered.

Ninth. She had not slept, two grains of Opium were then ordered to be given every two hours, with the infusion of Euagria, her pulse being rather stronger, the Brandy was omitted and wine substituted.

Twelfth. Nearly the same, she had slept but half an hour since her admission, the Opium was increased to three grains, every two hours.

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On the nineteenth she was discharged cured. Her powers were restored, arising the usual, & ordinary, action of the stomach, & bowels, which were good to take. Had it not been for the timely administration of stimuli, after the operation of the emetic, it is more than probable that she would have sunk, under debilitating influences. I had anticipated that deep and refreshing sleep, which is much spoken of by L. Keppel, would have taken place, but it broke out over her body, and she appeared to be sinking into the arms of death, in consequence of the utter prostration of all the energies of the system.

This case is not selected, merely as a single instance, in which emetics have failed, but to give a general idea of the operation of these agents on the system, in this disease, and also as one, which fell under my own personal observation, and is fully corroborated with the statements of gentlemen, who have resided in the Alm's House, and have had ample opportunities of judging of their effects.

We may be induced to prescribe this remedy, when at the very commencement of the disease, the patient is strong, and plethoric, and has not been addicted to the use of purgatives, for any length of time, and where there is an evident disposition to vomit, without the power of effecting it.

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Indeed it must be admitted, that where emetics do succeed, the most signal benefit, often results from their employment; at the same time bearing in mind, that their administration requires great caution, and discrimination. Dr. Klapp prefers giving the Emetic Tassar alone, in large doses, until thorough evacuations both upwards, and downwards are produced. But it is a safer plan, to combine it with Spicacuanha, in doses of from one to two grains of the former, with twenty or thirty grains of the latter.

In the next place let us consider Purgatives. These appear to be of great value, in the treatment of this disease. They fulfil many of the indications to meet which Emetics have been proposed, and they act without producing those alarming symptoms, which have been before stated, as following the employment of these remedies. The bowels are frequently constipated, and sometimes require active purgatives to relieve them of their contents. For strongly recommending this, another very strong argument occurs, it begins the most efficacious, but with this limitation (which appears to be extremely proper) that it is to be pursued only, in the early periods of the disease.

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He also during the operation of purgatives, recommends supporting the system, by cordial stimulants.

In addition we treat on Dr. Keen's views (the same as we have to treat on) much favourably of them, though we does not consider them, as the most important of our remedies.

It has been stated, as a serious objection to the use of purgatives, that the patient is apt to be carried off by diarrhoea. This seldom or never happens, if the directions relative to their employment, laid down by Dr Armstrong, be strictly pursued.

The purgatives most commonly used are Calomel, Jalap, and the sulphate of Magnesia; in their administration we must be entirely regulated, by the age, constitution, and circumstances of the Patient. In the utmost stages of the disease, & nemata, are to be resorted to Purgatives.

I shall speak next of Bleeding, a question is sometimes misapprehended, except in some few cases, where great plethora exists, and where there is great determination to the brain, or some other important organ. Blood should in general be abstracted by cup or leech, applied if possible to the part affected, in that case the taking

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away of a small quantity, will often be found serviceable.
Dry cupping may be used in almost every case, with
advantage. The pulse as a general rule, cannot be
safely relied upon in this disease, it may be full and
quick, and seem to indicate depletion in cases, where
nothing could be more prejudicial. I have seen the
obstruction of two or three ounces of blood from the arm
of a patient (whose symptoms in almost any other disease,
would have called for copious depletion) nearly produce
syncope. If we draw blood from a vein, it should always
be done slowly, and from a small orifice, not should we wait
to observe its effects, but go on immediately with the other
remedies. This disease was formerly treated by some
Practitioners as genuine Phrenitis, by active depletion,
measures, blisters, &c, as may be easily supposed, the results
were so discouraging, that they were obliged to abandon
them, and resort to remedies of a different description.

Blisters do not appear to be much used in this disease.
They have been condemned by many Physicians, as very
prejudicial, occasioning and augmenting irritation, and
retarding the effects of other medicines.

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what has occurred to me, on the subject of emetics, let us
in the next place consider such remedies, as are of an opposite
character. Of these Opium is undoubtedly the first in importance.

When, and by whom this medicine was first introduced into
the practice in this disease, cannot now be correctly ascer-
tained, but it appears, that it was used as a principal
agent in its cure, by many practitioners, before the disease
had even a name, or had obtained a place in any system
of nosology. From this circumstance, and also because
it retains the greater part of its celebrity at the present day,
notwithstanding the objections which have been urged
against it by some writers, we may fairly conclude, that
it is entitled to our confidence, and merits a full experi-
ment of its effects. The chief indication in Mania la-
bilis, is to induce sleep, and if this can be successfully
accomplished, the most happy consequences will
generally result. For this purpose, Opium is preeminently
serviceable, although when we consider its stimulant
properties, it might appear to be inadmissible in a
disease, such as this apparently is. But the symptoms
are very deceptive, they sometimes seem imperatively to
demand depletion, whilst an opposite course of treatment

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will frequently succeed. There is always great irritability of the system, which must be subdued, before a favourable termination can be expected, and this cannot be effected in general so promptly, and efficaciously, by any other remedy. It occupies the place of the ordinary stimulus, to which the stomach has been accustomed, while at the same time it is effecting a cure of the disease. I do not however mean to assert, that opium will alone invariably perform a cure, but that it will be found to be the principal medicine, on which we are to rely; and that when proper measures are used, in conjunction with it, we may look for the most favourable results. But to obtain these, the dose must be both large and frequently repeated, and we should not be deterred, if success should not follow our first attempts, but persevere until the system is completely under its influence. The quantity of opium, which may be safely given to patients, who perhaps never took a grain before in the whole course of their lives, is almost incredible. As much as half an ounce of Laudanum, and from twenty to thirty grains of opium have been given in the twenty-four hours, without producing sound sleep. To be sure such a case is not frequently met

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by this medicine, combined with Niter. Sometimes Opium although given largely, will not produce the desired effect, in such cases it is advisable to add the tincture of Kops, which will frequently succeed in causing sleep. In exhibiting of the better plan is to combine it with Niter, even one or two ounces for a bottle, to be given in the twenty four hours.

The tincture of Spasmodia, is also very serviceable. In the disease the patient is generally affected with a deeping degree of torpor, preventing digestion and excretion, and strength. To quiet this, tincture of Spasmodia is particularly adapted, it is warming, non-irritating, a kind of agreeable stimulus to the stomach. It should be given in combination with opium, the operation is such that it greatly assists, instead of retarding, which even might be the case, if we merely considered the separate properties of the two medicines. From one drachm, to no. 1 an ounce, may be given repeated frequently.

Or another has sometimes proved a very useful remedy, but in general, we should be careful in prescribing, not to give a powerful, and reviving stimulus, the object

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in order to obtain, in every instance, a corresponding degree of excitement to suit the constitution of the patient, and at the same time, to increase it when necessary, that the stomach of the patient is inactive to itself. On the other hand, if the disease, it is more peculiarly limited, where the system requires an unusual degree of stimulus to excite action. The best method of giving it, is in small doses, or rather to give grains, very soon or three or four combined with the mixture.

The phorm has been recommended, and used, in one case only, in which it was tried, was some loss of knowledge, and in that instance it was successful. Opium grains were daily given in a quantity of $\frac{1}{2}$ grain, and a trismus of the jaw given in the form of a powder. The dose may be given large, but it must be recollected, that in this disease the system will rather bear a small degree of stimulus.

The stability of the disease, in the form of mania, in the present case, should not be taken not to commence with too large a dose, as the effect of it, from the nature of the remedy, would soon be lost.

From the above supposition, no caution will probably

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be found in milder, in the same stage of the disease, in which
 bleeding is proper, and if we may be permitted to reason
 from usual exp^{ts}, this medicine (which is well known as
 being one of the most powerful agents, ... whose influence we
 are likely to be exerting the vital powers in the system,
 when they have almost been extinguished by the violence
 of disease) would certainly rank very high in the list
 of remedies to be used in these disorders.

Dr. Armstrong speaks favourably of a combination of
 iodium and opium, which he has used pretty extensively.
 After having evacuated the bowels, he prescribes two or
 three grains of iodium and one and a half of opium every
 six or eight hours for the first days, and then increases
 the quantity of opium, until saturation is produced,
 when a more cautious action is directed. Never having seen
 this remedy used, I cannot speak of its utility, but coming
 from such a source, it is certainly entitled to great con-
 fidence. Of course, it would not do in very violent cases,
 where the patient is sometimes carried off in two or three
 days. The same writer also recommends affusions
 with warm and cold water, strongly impregnated
 with salt, to excite the action, of the capillary vessels.

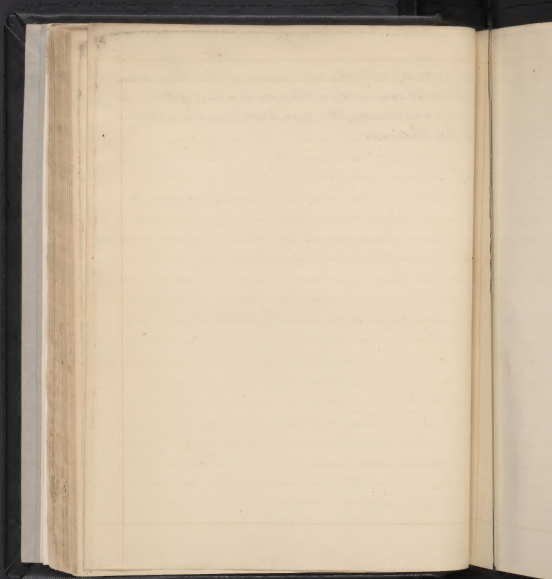
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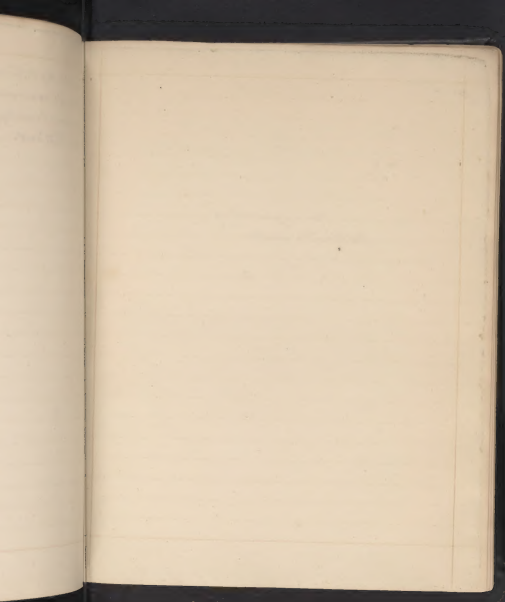
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No 10
126 N. 2^d St.

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1824

A very excellent & judicious Essay, appearing
might be founded on practical observation.

J. R. C.

Mania a Potu.

Charles Randolph